

Resolution # 65-13

The Graduate and Professional Student Association (GPSA) The Pennsylvania State University



of the 65th Assembly
11/4/2015

Be it decided by the Assembly of Elected Delegates,

Adoption of the Legislative Platform (Decided: [Y / N / A])

1 **Nature of the Situation:**

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3 GPSA has historically partnered with a number of organizations to advocate for increased state
4 support for Penn State. One such event is Capital Day, where students, with the help of Penn
5 State's Grassroots Network and Alumni, meet with legislators in Harrisburg to advocate for
6 increased state appropriations. However, during these meetings, too much focus is given to
7 general appropriations rather than highlighting other legislative needs of the student body.
8 Particularly, the needs of the graduate student body, which is generally unaffected by general
9 state appropriations, is left out of these legislative efforts. A lack of a united student message
10 leaves students without specific points or guidance for these discussions.

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12 In March 2015, the three Penn State student governments formed the Penn State Legislative
13 Outreach Commission. The purpose of this commission was to bring together all Penn State
14 student stakeholders to develop a more effective and long-term plan for legislative outreach and
15 to enhance our advocacy efforts when dealing with legislators and university decision makers.
16 The Legislative Outreach Commission developed a united message that will represent the nearly
17 100,000 Penn State students across the Commonwealth. The Penn State Legislative Platform
18 encompasses that united message and highlights the student body's legislative priorities at the
19 Federal, State, and Board of Trustees levels.

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21 **Recommended Course of Action:**

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23 The GPSA resolves to adopt the Penn State Legislative Platform, as drafted and recommended
24 by the Legislative Outreach Commission [APPENDIX A]. This platform shall be presented at

1 meetings with legislators by members of the GPSA and shall be used in all relevant legislative
2 outreach activities.

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4 The GPSA charges the Department of Communications with disseminating the platform through
5 appropriate channels.
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Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Horne
President

President _____ Affirm Veto

The Graduate and Professional Student Association

THE PENN STATE LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM**Federal Level:**

Topic	Description	Source & Support:
Research Funding	Advocate for increased federal dollars toward graduate and undergraduate research appropriations across the Commonwealth, as well as increased dollars for equipment and facilities.	UPUA CCSG GPSA
Pell Grants	Advocate that sufficient Pell Grants be available to use throughout the year, including the summer, as opposed to being limited to two semesters.	UPUA CCSG GPSA
Lender Requirements	Advocate for an amendment to the 2008 Higher Education Opportunity Act, to give students more options when searching for loans and discussing financial aid issues with higher education institutions. Advocate for the ability for students to refinance their loans to reflect current interest rate levels.	UPUA CCSG GPSA

Commonwealth Level:

Topic	Description	Source & Support:
No New Taxes	Advocate against any newly proposed taxes that would cause an increase in the overall cost of higher education including tangential costs (e.g. tax on meal plans, books, etc.)	UPUA, GPSA, CCSG
Right to Self Insure	Advocate to the Legislature to allow student health plans in Pennsylvania the right to self insure	UPUA, CCSG, GPSA
Increased Appropriations	Advocate for increased financial support for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Tuition: Increased appropriations to reduce the cost of tuition - Mental Health Services: Use mental health resources as a selling point for higher appropriations - Student Entrepreneurship: Pushing one of Barron's key initiatives in discussions with legislators as a selling point for higher appropriations 	UPUA, CCSG, GPSA
PHEAA Relief	Advocate for financial relief to students who are not receiving their refunds from PHEAA due to the budget impasse in the Legislature.	UPUA, CCSG, GPSA

Penn State Level:

Topic	Description	Source & Support:
Student	Advocate to allow students representatives to select their committee of	UPUA,

Representatives to Board of Trustees	membership on the Board of Trustees and have an end to the rotating seats between CCSG and UPUA so that both organizations have two student representatives on Board of Trustee committees. The additional student seat would be placed on the Academic Affairs and Student Life Committee.	CCSG, GPSA
Student Vote on Board of Trustees Committees	Advocate for student representative voting privileges on respective Board of Trustee Committees.	UPUA CCSG GPSA
Mental Health	Advocate for a larger allocation to mental health care across the Commonwealth.	UPUA CCSG GPSA